

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
NSC-05 /065 W
-----093953 271158Z /47

R 270937Z JUL 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECDEF WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 5098

C O N F I D E N T I A L NATO 07244

SECDEF FOR ASD(C3I)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETEL MARR NATO
SUBJECT: PROPOSED HIGH LEVEL FOUR POWER MEETING ON TACTICAL
AREA COMMUNICATIONS

REF: STATE 169740 (DTG 202237Z JUL 77)

SUMMARY: THE SUBJECT MEETING WILL NOT INCLUDE REPS OF
BELGIUM, ITALY, AND THE NETHERLANDS. WE BELIEVE THAT THE
US SHOULD UNDERTAKE SOME FORM OF DIALOGUE WITH THESE ALLIES,
EACH OF WHOM WILL BE PRODUCING EQUIPMENT OF THE TYPE IN
QUESTION. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE US REP TO THE FOUR-POWER
MEETING CONSIDER EXTENDING HIS TRIP TO INCLUDE THE HAGUE
AND BRUSSELS. AS A FALLBACK, WE RECOMMEND LETTERS TO THE
BELGIAN, ITALIAN, AND DUTCH ARMAMENT DIRECTORS. ACTION
REQUESTED: WASHINGTON GUIDANCE. END SUMMARY.

1. WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SUBJECT
MEETING, AND WE ARE REPORTING ON DETAILS BY SEPTTEL.

2. THE MEETING AS NOW CONSTITUTED WILL INCLUDE REPS OF
FRANCE, GERMANY, AND THE UK. WE FAVOR LIMITING THIS MULTI-
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LATERAL MEETING TO THESE THREE ALLIES. HOWEVER, WE ALSO
BELIEVE THAT THE US SHOULD UNDERTAKE SOME FORM OF DIALOGUE
WITH THE NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, AND ITALY ON TACTICAL AREA
COMMUNICATIONS. EACH OF THESE NATIONS HAS AN IMPORTANT
ROLE AND, FOR DIFFERENT REASONS, SHOULD RECEIVE ATTENTION
FROM THE US.

A. BELGIUM HAS TEAMED WITH FRANCE ON RITA, AND FRANCE

CANNOT UNILATERALLY CHANGE THE SYSTEM. BELGIAN AFFRONT AT NOT BEING CONSULTED COULD LEAD TO AN ADAMANT POSITION AGAINST CHANGING THE SYSTEM.

B. THE EUROCOM CHAIRMAN (COL DE BIE) IS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE NETHERLANDS MOD AND IS AN INFLUENTIAL ADVISER ON TACTICAL COMMUNICATIONS MATTERS. HE IS VERY DEDICATED TO THE EUROCOM SYSTEM (ALMOST FANATICALLY SO) AND COULD CONVINCE DUTCH AUTHORITIES TO OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE SYSTEM AS NOW SPECIFIED. WE BELIEVE THAT THE US SHOULD SEEK TO GAIN SUPPORT OF DE BIE'S SUPERIORS.

C. ITALY CLAIMS TO HAVE DEVELOPED ITS CATRIN SYSTEM TO CONFORM TO EUROCOM SPECIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS. ITALIAN REPS HAVE STATED AN UNWILLINGNESS TO MODIFY THE DESIGN OF CATRIN. WE DO NOT KNOW THE TRUE STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF CATRIN, BUT WE BELIEVE IT IS NOT READY FOR PRODUCTION AND, HENCE, CAN BE MODIFIED COMPARATIVELY EASILY. HOWEVER, SUPPORT OF SENIOR ITALIAN OFFICIALS MAY BE NECESSARY TO OBTAIN ANY CHANGES TO EUROCOM SPECIFICATIONS.

3. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE US REP TO THE PROPOSED HIGH LEVEL MEETING CONSIDER EXTENDING HIS TRIP TO INCLUDE BRIEF VISITS TO THE HAGUE AND BRUSSELS TO MEET WITH APPROPRIATE DUTCH AND BELGIAN OFFICIALS. IF THESE VISITS ARE NOT PRACTICABLE, WE RECOMMEND THAT THE DDR&E SEND LETTERS TO THE ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS OF BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS

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SOLICITING THEIR PERSONAL SUPPORT FOR THE US OBJECTIVES. WE ALSO RECOMMEND SUCH A LETTER TO THE ITALIAN ARMAMENTS DIRECTOR, INASMUCH AS A VISIT TO ROME WOULD SEEM TO BE UNLIKELY.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON GUIDANCE. BENNETT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NATO07244
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770711/aaaaajkz.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: 95f8f662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 169740 (DTG 202237Z JUL 77
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1728539
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED HIGH LEVEL FOUR POWER MEETING ON TACTICAL AREA COMMUNICATIONS
TAGS: ETEL, MARR, NATO
To: WASHDC SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/95f8f662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009